

A17-59

# Killed In Air Crash

TAMWORTH, Wednesday. Leading Aircraftman William Moore Aspinall, 24, was killed instantly today when an R.A.A.F. training plane crashed and burst into flames on Manilla Road, 10 miles from Tamworth.

Flying low, Aspinall crashed trying to dodge power transmission wires.

He did not have enough height to go over them, so went between them and a fence below. Then he was faced by a lower set of wires on the opposite side of the road.

The machine, a Tiger Moth, dived into the ground.

It was reduced to a heap of twisted metal.

Part of the engine was melted.

## "Only 30ft. Up"

Arthur Quick, who was working in a paddock nearby, said:—

"Planes are over here every day, and I am accustomed to them being low, but this fellow was just over my head, only 30 feet up.

"It looked momentarily as if he would strike a shed, but he passed over the left side of it. Then he made a semi-turn and dived into the ground.

"There was a sharp explosion. I raced to the plane but though I could see the pilot slumped in the seat, flames prevented me getting near enough to attempt a rescue."

Aspinall was a trainee at the elementary flying school at Tamworth. He had had 20 hours solo flying.

## Only Son

Aspinall was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Aspinall, of Military Road, Mosman.

There are five daughters in the family.

He was called up on July 22, before he had secured his "A" pilot's licence, and was drafted to No. 1 Initial Training School at Bradfield Park.

On September 19 he was transferred to Tamworth elementary flying training school.

DAILY TELEGRAPH (SYDNEY)

10.10.40

# AIR TRAINEE KILLED.

## Tamworth Plane Crash.

TAMWORTH, Wednesday.

Leading Aircraftman William Moore Aspinall, 24, of Sydney, was killed when the Tiger Moth training plane which he was flying solo crashed on to the Manilla Road, 10 miles from Tamworth, this morning, and burst into flames.

An eye-witness, Arthur Quick, who had waved to Aspinall as he flew over a few moments before, tried to rescue the pilot, who was trapped in the cockpit, but the heat beat him back. When the wreckage cooled off it was found that Aspinall had not released his safety belt, and it is thought that he was either dead or unconscious before the petrol tank in front of him exploded and the fire spread.

The plane, which crashed from about 40 feet, was reduced to a heap of twisted metal. The flames were so hot that part of the engine melted.

Aspinall was a trainee at the 6th Elementary Flying Training School, Tamworth. It is believed that he was practising forced landings when the plane crashed.

The plane came from the direction of the flying school, descended, and circled several times round a wheat paddock half a mile from the scene of the crash, then banked to move towards a lucerne paddock where Quick was working.

Quick said that the plane passed 30 feet over his head, and he waved to the pilot, who did not seem to be in any difficulty. Suddenly, the machine planed up, made a semi-turn, and dived into the ground. There was a sharp explosion. He raced to the scene, but when he got there the plane was blazing fiercely.

Within 15 minutes of the crash the plane was almost burnt out.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

10.10.40